

## Love Is Strange

by MizJoely

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Summary: A post-Reichenbach mashup of Doctor Strange/Sherlock: What if Sherlock had spent those two years he was gone in Tibet, studying at the feet of the Ancient One?

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Molly opened her locker, ready to head home after another long day at work. The reflection she saw made her gasp in surprise; behind her own, expected face, was another. A face she hadn't seen in two long, lonely years. "Sherlock!"

She turned to face him, a smile on her lips, but the smile faded as she felt something entirely unexpected from him. A shiver ran over her at the subtle emanation of mystical power she felt coming from him. She reached out with her rarely-used inner senses, and somehow wasn't surprised at all when the man she'd known only as a brilliant consulting detective had mystical shields she couldn't penetrate.

After all, when she'd fled her father's realm and taken on the identity of a quiet human woman who'd been the victim of a serial killer, she'd only been an apprentice. And with no one here on Earth to whom she dared reach out for training (lest she put them and herself in danger from her father's hunters), she'd barely advanced her abilities at all.

Clearly Sherlock had spent his two years away doing something other than simply chasing down Jim Moriarty's network and dismantling it.

"Tibet," he said in answer to her unspoken question. He quirked an eyebrow. "The Ancient One. Why did you never seek her out yourself, Molly? Or do you prefer your real name, whatever that might be?"

"It's Clea," she said quietly. "Daughter of the Dread Dormammu, ruler of the Dark Dimension." In for a penny, in for a pound; she might as well give him all of it rather than try to keep secrets from him. There was nothing to gain from holding back, and possibly everything to be lost. Including his trust in her.

He frowned. "A dangerous being, your father. I've heard a great deal about him during the last two years. So you're the runaway daughter." He contemplated her human guise, then with a gesture banished it. She stood unflinching under his gaze, seeing with her mind's eye what he now saw: her pale white hair with its two untameable, horn-like twists rising from her brow while the rest flowed past her shoulders; her slightly taller and slimmer form in a soft violet leotard; the dark purple tights with the intertwined circles forming a pattern from ankles to thighs on her legs; the impractically long fingernails gracing her hands; the unearthly pale blue of her eyes.

Those eyes, which appeared a warm brown from the moment she took Molly Hooper's form for her own, were the only part of her face that would have changed to Sherlock's mystical gaze. Her other features - nose, chin, lips, the size and shape of her eyes...all of that would remain the same, now and forevermore. She'd expended a great deal of her own stores of mystical energy to ensure that Molly Hooper's features were now permanently her own. It was partly to make her disguise as foolproof as possible, but it was also to honor the woman whose identity she'd taken on as the original Molly Hooper lay dying. Clea had been unable to save her life, arriving far too late for that, but she had been able to ensure that she didn't die alone.

With another gesture Sherlock returned her fully to her human form. He raised his arms and then lowered them swiftly, and his own disguise dropped away. Oh, he was still Sherlock Holmes, but with new streaks of white in his hair along his temples, hair that was cut too short for his curls. She mourned their loss, but approved very much of the goatee he now sported, and marveled at the sight of the red cloak of levitation he wore over his sorcerous apparel - and the amulet that lay on his chest. "Is thatâ€¦?"

"The All-Seeing Eye of Agamotto? Indeed," he replied, a hint of approval in his voice at her recognition of the ancient artifact. "Obviously I chose even more wisely than I thought when I trusted you to help me fake my death." He smiled, one of his rare, sincerely warm smiles, and offered her his hand. "So, Clea - or do you prefer Molly even if we're alone?"

"Molly," she said firmly, placing her hand in his. "I ran away from my father because I didn't like who I was becoming. I much prefer who I am now."

He nodded as if he understood exactly what she was talking about - and considering the circumstances, it was very likely he did. "The Ancient One said I would find my apprentice once I returned to London." He drew her closer, the corners of his eyes crinkling as he smiled down at her again. "She said I would know them when I saw them. And once again, she's shown just how perceptive she is. That is, if you're willing to let me teach you?"

"What do you need?" she asked him by way of answer, a smile touching

her lips.

"You," he replied instantly, without hesitation. As he pulled her closer and cradled her head in his hands, he said it again, his voice a low murmur. "You." Then he kissed her, the touch of his lips warm and gentle against hers, and she rejoiced at knowing that the man she'd fallen in love with so many human years ago had finally found a way to love her back.

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><p><em>AN: It is very possible I will someday expand this into a multichapter fic, but for now it remains a one-shot. Thank you for reading!\_

End  
file.